

(Luke) 16 - Ch4-14 to 9-6 Overview

by Ed Miller

Ed Miller's sermon explores the Gospel of Luke, emphasizing Jesus' role as the friend of all mankind through His miracles and ministry to the needy.

Duration: 46:51

Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-2, Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 4:14-19, Luke 4:33-44

Topics: "Jesus Ministry", "Biblical Parables"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the teaching aspect of the first nine chapters of the Gospel of Luke. He highlights that although these chapters primarily focus on action and miracles, there are also nine parables included. These parables are short but still convey important teachings. The speaker emphasizes that Jesus' ministry is centered on bringing good news and relief to the poor and needy. The sermon also provides an outline of the rest of chapter four, highlighting the different locations where Jesus performs miracles.

Transcript

We're studying the Gospel of Luke and the distinctive message of the Gospel of Luke is this. Luke presents our Lord Jesus as the Son of all mankind. In other words, before this you would have had a very distinctive Jewish influence.

So much so that they were calling themselves God's chosen and God's special people. And they felt like they had sort of a corner on the Lord. Luke comes along and says, yes, He's going to come through the line of the Jews.

But for everybody, the Jews become the channel of redemption. But the Savior is not just a Jewish Savior. He's the Savior of all mankind.

Luke especially emphasizes when he says all mankind, the lowest of mankind. The neediest, the most depressed. And he said, I'm coming in order to minister unto the downtrodden.

And Luke has a great emphasis on this. In our discussion we've come to what is almost the heart of the book. Chapter 4.14 all the way through chapter 19.28. We call this the ministry of the Son of all mankind.

Just a little donkey work to get us back in focus. Last time I told you that the ministry of our Lord Jesus, He was on the earth for 33.5 years, but only 3.5 years did He minister publicly. And those 3.5 years are

divided up into three sections.

We call the first part the Judean ministry of our Lord. Luke doesn't even mention that. He just jumps right over that.

If you want the Judean ministry, you've got to study the Gospel of John. And then the Galilean ministry, where He sort of headquartered at Capernaum and ministered around Galilee. Now that's a big part of His ministry.

And that takes you all the way to Luke chapter 9 and verse 50. And then the last part of His ministry was Judean and Parian. And Luke also mentioned that.

We're discussing now the Galilean ministry of Christ. And so His ministry goes from 4 to 19. His Galilean ministry only goes from 4 to 9. And then His Judean ministry from 9 to chapter 19.

We call His Galilean ministry, just to have a handle to work with, the Lord as the friend of all mankind. And we call Him the friend of all mankind because in this section, He's basically doing, not talking. He does talk.

He does teach. But He's basically doing. It's a section of action.

In other words, you'd expect to find and do a great many miracles in this particular section. Because He's showing Himself now as the great friend of all mankind. After chapter 9, it's primarily speaking.

And that's where you get all of the parables and so on. In the teaching ministry of our Lord Jesus. So we've called this first section, Jesus friend of all mankind.

And then the next section, Jesus teacher of all mankind. Now there is overlapping. Just because chapter 4, 14 to 9, 50 is primarily action.

Primarily miracles. That doesn't mean there's no teaching. In fact, out of the 30 parables in the gospel of Luke, 9 of them are in this first section.

But they're little parables. What I mean is, when we think of a parable, we think of the parable of the sower, or the parable of the banquet hall, or something like that. But there are other little parables, like mixing a new garment and an old garment.

That only takes a verse to say, but it's still a parable. Or mixing new wine with old wine. Or having a moat in your eye, or a beam in your eye.

It only takes a sentence to say it, but it's a parabolic sentence. And it's teaching, there's instruction there. And so the first 9 chapters have a lot of those little parables.

One sentence or so. And we'll touch on those as we go along. But pretty much it's all about the miracle.

In the gospel of Luke, there are 20 miracles. And 14 of them are in this section, the Galilean ministry, that we're going to look at now. Just so, in the next section, you'll find mostly parables.

But there are miracles there too. In fact, Luke gives you 6 miracles no other gospel writer gives up. And 3 of those that are unique are in that particular section.

For example, Luke tells us about a woman who was humped over for 18 years. You wouldn't find that in Matthew or Mark or John. Luke's the only one that tells us about that.

Luke's the only one that tells us about the man who was healed of dropsy. Luke is the only one that tells us about Malchus. Remember Malchus in the Garden of Gethsemane? Remember Peter went to rescue the Lord and cut off his ear.

And then the Lord Jesus picked up his ear and healed his ear. Only Luke tells us that. And so there is overlapping, but basically we're beginning a section now called Jesus, Friend of All Mankind.

And I'd like to introduce you this morning to the great miracles of our Lord Jesus. And that should prepare us then to take them one by one. When we left off last time, I had shown you this was his rejection in his hometown of Nazareth.

And I had shown you, and if you'll turn there again, chapter 4 please, how he quoted Isaiah sort of as his mandate to begin his ministry. He said, God has anointed me, and here's what I'll be doing. Follow along please in chapter 4 beginning at verse 16.

And he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up, and as was his custom, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed him. He opened the book and found the place where it was written.

Now he's quoting Isaiah, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captive, recovery of sight to the blind, and to set free those who are downtrodden, and to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. And he closed the book and gave it back to the attendant.

And he sat down, and the eyes of all were riveted upon him. And he began to say, today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. And that's how it all began.

In his boyhood town, he said, God's Spirit is on me, and he's anointed me to preach to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to heal the broken hearted, to give sight to the blind, and those who are oppressed, to set them free and to emancipate them. This whole section now will show him doing exactly that. He's going out into the poor.

He's going to bring wonderful good news and relief, especially to those who are most needy. Now what I'd like to do this morning, instead of beginning at chapter 4, verse 14, where we left off, I want to take the whole section. I think if we can get an overview, sort of fly over the whole thing, dip down here and there, and get the big picture first.

Then next time, Lord willing, we'll come back and then take it section by section. So what I'd like to do is show you this morning, Jesus, friend of all mankind, chapter 4, verse 14 to 9, verse 50, with emphasis on His action, on His tremendous miracle. Now, don't think when I say that, that the miracles began in chapter 4. His ministry began in chapter 4. But we've had miracles all along.

I mean, the virgin birth was a miracle, and the appearance of the angels and the star and so on. There were a lot of miracles we've already had. But now we're beginning what we call the miracles that He worked in order to relieve the poor.

There were four areas that Luke calls attention to over which our Lord Jesus had authority. In other words, He worked miracles in these four groups. Now let me just mention those for you.

The first is demons. He had power, authority over demons. Now look at chapter 4, verse 33, please.

And there was a man in the synagogue possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, Ha! What have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God. Jesus rebuked him, saying, Be quiet, come out of him.

And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him without doing him any harm. And amazement came upon them all. And they began discussing one with another, saying, What is this message? For with authority and power He commands unclean spirits, and they come out.

And the report of Him was getting into every locality in all of the surrounding district. And so Luke begins by showing this power over demons. And then in Luke chapter 8, we have another illustration of it.

I won't get into it now, but you know the story of the demon-possessed man in the country of the Gerizim. He's the one that Jesus said, What is your name? to the demons. And they said, Legion, we're many.

And remember Jesus then cast them into the swine. They asked permission. And by the way, there's your first Bible illustration of doubled ham.

Ouch, that's right, that was bad. And then in Luke chapter 8, the transfiguration. Now that little boy was tormented, and that's where, remember that famous verse, I believe, help my unbelief.

The father came and just wanted some help for his son. In Luke 9.42 it says, While he was still approaching, the demon dashed him to the ground and threw him into a convulsion. Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, gave him back to his father.

Now I quoted those three stories because as Luke unfolds the ministry of Christ, at the beginning, he talks about Jesus casting out demons. In the middle, he talks about Jesus casting out demons. And then he ends this whole section with Jesus casting out demons.

And so by mentioning it at the beginning and in the middle and in the end, Luke calls attention to this great power. And then all sprinkled through, but we don't have the record, but we have the occasion. It says, And many came who were demon-possessed.

But we don't have the story. It's just that he kept doing this all through his ministry. And so we see his power over demons.

A second area over which Jesus had authority, obviously, was disease. Not only demons, but also disease. He begins in chapter 4, verse 38, with Peter's mother-in-law.

We'll pick that up toward the end of this lesson. She had this high fever, you remember. In chapter 4, verse 40, if you just glance at that verse, it says, While the sun was setting, all who had any sick with various diseases brought them to him, and laying his hands on every one of them, he was healing them.

So it's not only individual story, but Luke keeps calling attention to by the end of the day, the whole city had come out, and every village. And he was just healing everybody of everything. Now listen to 5.17. If you want to glance there, you may.

And it came about one day that he was teaching, and there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present for him to perform healing. We know in Jerusalem, there were about 240 villages connected.

And it said out of every village. And that's just in Jerusalem, and Judea, Samaria, all in those areas. They were coming out in droves.

And he was just healing. So he had individual healings and mass healing. Sometime he healed with a touch, sometime with an act of his will, sometime when he was there, sometime from a distance.

As I studied it, I thought I'd do it a little differently. The one he did at a distance, the centurion servant, remember that? He just said, it'll be done. And he went home and it was done.

But then he touched the leper. Well, if you study leprosy, I think I'd have done that one at a distance. It just said, you're healed.

But he just reached out and touched the leper. Everything's instructed on the way he did it. But he had power over disease.

We won't read these, I'll just refer to them. In chapter 5, 18 to 25, he healed the paralytic. Remember, that's where they let him down through the roof.

We'll get into that in some detail. Chapter 6, the man with the withered hand. Chapter 7, the centurion's servant.

Chapter 8, the woman that had the issue of blood for 12 years. And so he had power over the physical. And even after chapter 9, when we get into the teaching section, he healed the deaf and he healed the blind and he healed the humped and he healed dropsy and he healed the man whose ear had been severed and so on.

Jesus was a friend of the sick. No question about it. He had power over demons.

He had power over disease. Luke also calls attention to his power over death. Not only demons and disease, but death.

Glance, if you would, at chapter 7. I don't even need to say anything about this. It speaks for itself. It's such a powerful story.

Beginning in verse 11. This is the widow's son at Nain. This is the only place it's recorded in the Bible.

It came about. Verse 11. Chapter 7, verse 11.

It came about soon afterward. He went to a city called Nain. His disciples were going with him.

Accompanying him were great, large numbers. And he approached the gate of the city and behold, a dead man was being carried out. The only son of his mother.

She was a widow. A sizable crowd from the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he felt compassion.

And he said, do not weep. And he came up and touched the coffin. And the bearers came to a halt.

He said, young man, I say to you, arise. And the dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.

Talk about breaking up a funeral service. They were on their way to the cemetery. He was in the coffin.

And this is just such a powerful illustration. The power of Jesus over demons. The power of the Lord Jesus over disease.

And here's this graphic story. His power over death. We sort of read these la, la, la.

But it must have been a tremendous thing to be there at that time and to watch some of these things. I remember Jairus' daughter in chapter 8. Remember Jairus had a daughter and he kept saying, Lord, you've got to come. She's so sick.

She's so sick. And by the way, we'll get into that. But that's where he was interrupted.

You know, if you had a daughter that's sick and you're bringing a healer to your home, you sort of have an emergency. She's 12 years old. Come, fast.

And then this woman reached out and touched the hem of his garment. And one thing that did, it delayed the process. And I know how Jairus felt when he said, alright, who touched me? And then everybody stopped and they're looking around, who did it, and so on.

And I know she had a problem, but she had her problem for a long time and maybe she could wait until Tuesday or something. But she interrupted. And by the time it was over, they came out and met him and said, don't bother the teacher anymore.

Your little girl died. In other words, that delay caused this little girl to die. And Jesus just said to him, don't be afraid, only believe.

And then you remember the story. He went in, took her by the hand, and just said, Talitha Kumai, rise up. Little girl, I just say to you, arise.

And she rose up. So he had power over demons. He had power over disease.

Luke calls attention to his power over death. One other area that Luke stresses. He also had power over nature.

He had power over nature. Luke chapter 8, you remember the stilling of the storm. And Luke chapter 8, 25 said, who is this that he commands even the wind and the waves that they obey him? And also in Luke chapter 9, the feeding of the 5,000.

And this, in a sense, is a miracle over nature. Because he just sort of speeded up the process by multiplying those loaves. He took care of the plowing.

He took care of the planting, the growing, the harvesting, the grinding, the cooking. Made all the bread and multiplied it, and so on. He did all of that in a moment of time.

So Jesus had tremendous authority here. Luke is the only one that mentions that miraculous catch of fish. Remember, there were so many.

Jesus needed a little pulpit, so Peter offered his boat. And he went out a little from the shore, and he stood on the boat and used it as a pulpit. And afterward, you know, Jesus doesn't do anything for free, and so he paid his wages.

He said, cast your net over the side. And he cast his net, and there were just so many fish. The nets began to break, and so on.

Luke calls attention to the tremendous authority of the Lord over demons, over disease, over death, and over nature. Now, some of these things we just sort of read with these eyes in Passover, and he did this, that, and the other thing. But underneath all of these things are tremendous spiritual realities.

And we're going to miss a great blessing in Luke if we just say he healed six blind men, and healed two deaf people, and he raised up ten lepers, and so on. We've got to get more than that. Now, in order to get this before you, I want to bring Matthew's account and Luke's account of the miracles together in order that you might see what we're going to go after in our discussion.

I hope it makes sense as we go through it. When you go through the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew is categorical. He is so analytical, unlike Luke.

Luke just sort of tells the story and you can enter in. But Matthew cuts it up. He says, this is the history section.

And when you read Matthew, that's all you get. And then you get, this is the teaching section. There's no miracles in Matthew's teaching section.

It's just teaching, parable after parable after parable. You come to chapters 8 and 9 of Matthew, and you get all miracles. That's all, nothing else.

Just miracle after miracle, one after another, chapter 8 and 9, ten miracles in a row. Now, I call attention to that because right in the middle of the miracle section, you've got five miracles and something. And then five more miracles.

What does Matthew put smack dab in the middle of the miracles? And the answer is, listen to Matthew chapter 9, 9, and as Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office. And he said unto him, follow me. And he rose up and followed him.

Matthew said, I'm going to tell you about miracles. Jesus did this, and he did this, and he did this, and he did this. And he saved me.

And he did this, and he did this, and he did this, and he did this. And right in the middle of the miracles, he tells his own testimony. Why do you think he put it there? And I think the answer is because when the Lord reaches a person, that's the greatest miracle of all.

And so God, through Matthew, put that right in the middle of the miracle section. I don't know if you're familiar with this song, It Took a Miracle. You familiar with that? I'm not going to sing it for you, but I'll tell you the words of the chorus.

It took a miracle to put the stars in space. It took a miracle to hang the world in place. But when he saved my soul, cleansed and made me whole, that was a miracle of love and grace.

And so right in the middle of the miracles, you have this story about Matthew. Now let me tie that in to Luke. You see, Luke also, in the middle of his miracles, tells Matthew's testimony.

But Luke adds something Matthew didn't add. And that's what I want you to look at now. If you'll go to chapter 5 please, because this is going to become the key to understanding all the miracles.

Luke chapter 5, beginning at verse 27. And after that, he went out and noticed a tax gatherer named Levi. That's Matthew.

Sitting at the tax office, and he said to him, follow me. And he left everything behind, and he rose and began to follow him. Now here's what Matthew doesn't mention.

And Levi gave a big reception for him in his house. And there was a great crowd of tax gatherers and other people who were reclining at the table with them. And the Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at his disciples saying, why do you eat and drink with tax gatherers and sinners? Jesus answered and said to them, it is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick.

I've not come to call the righteous, but the sinners to repentance. Luke not only tells us of Matthew's conversion, and he does it in such a graphic way, he said he left everything, he rose up, and began to follow. Well see, that's what happens every time the Lord touches anybody's life.

Total surrender, they leave everything. Then resurrection, they rise up. And then progressive sanctification, they begin to follow the Lord.

But then Luke says that Matthew threw a great big party. Now there's some division among the commentators on why he threw the party. Some say it was to get all his friends to come to know the Lord.

And he came to know the Lord, and so he throws this great big party. We know there were a lot of tax gatherers at the party. A lot of his friends.

And some think from chapter 5, verse 30, because the Pharisees began to grumble, why does he eat with tax gatherers and sinners? I have an idea. Matthew ran with a rough crowd before he came to the Lord. And he said, hey, I found something that's great, and come on to my house, I want you to meet him.

And he threw this great big party with all of his rough friends there. And he got a lot of criticism. Our Lord Jesus, what are you eating with those guys for? Don't you know what they're like? Some say it wasn't to get his other friends to come to know the Lord, but it was almost like a farewell dinner.

Matthew knew that his life was changed now, and he couldn't run with these people anymore. And so he just threw a big reception saying, alright, this is goodbye. We're parting ways now.

I'm going to follow the Lord, and I can't drink with you and run with you and do this with you and that with you, and so on. Some think that's why he held the party. But Luke tells us the real reason.

I don't doubt that he wanted his friends to know the Lord. And I don't doubt his life was changed, and he said goodbye to some of his old friends. But here's what Luke says.

Luke 5.29, Levi gave a big reception for him. Who's the him? It's for Jesus. He's saying, thank you, thank you.

He's doing what the leper did. Remember the leper that returned after he was cleansed? He fell down. Matthew is so thankful, and he's just throwing a big party.

The NIV says, Levi held a great banquet for Jesus. I don't know if you're familiar with the Living Bible, Ken Taylor's. It's sort of a paraphrase.

It's not a translation, but I like how he paraphrases this. It says, Levi held a reception in his home with Jesus as the guest of honor. And I think that's exactly what happened.

Certainly evangelism, and certainly severing of the ways, but it was worship. It was thank you. It was, you've done so much for me, and I just want to let you know how much I'm thankful.

He had to vent his heart. Now when we come to Luke 5, we're going to study that in a little more detail. But what I want to do is show you what Jesus said at that banquet.

That dropped the key that unlocks all the miracles. And that's why I even believe in the testimony of someone who comes to the Lord and that he throws this great party and then Jesus says something at that particular banquet. Chapter 5, verses 31 and 32, here's what Jesus said.

And Jesus answered and said to them, It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. In verse 31, Jesus claimed to be a soul doctor.

He claimed to be a physician. He said physicians, the sick need a physician. The sinner needs me.

I am the physician of the soul. I am a spiritual physician. Now why is that important that he said that right in the middle of the miracle? And I think it's because all of the miracles are redemptive.

In other words, they're bigger than the physical. They tell a spiritual story. He's not just healing blind people.

He's saying, I will illustrate by healing the physically blind how I will heal the spiritually blind. He didn't just cleanse the leper. He cleansed the leper to show how he forgives sin.

There are spiritual realities behind all of the miracles. For example, in John chapter 9, after he healed the blind man, the Pharisees came up to him and said, we're not blind, are we? And he said, if you say you have no sin, you're blind. And he did the physical blindness to show a spiritual blindness.

When he healed the deaf, it was to show he that has an ear to hear. Let him hear. There's ears in your heart as well as on the side of your head.

And he does all of these miracles. He multiplies all of these things. And Peter just sort of stands there scratching his head saying, wow, I never saw a catch like this.

And what does Jesus say? In Luke chapter 5, 10, he says, do not fear. From now on, you'll be catching, man. I'll make you fishers of men.

That was an intention. There's a spiritual lesson behind all these miracles. And I would do you a disservice if I came here and said, alright, now he did this miracle and he healed the lame and he healed the blind and if I didn't show you the spiritual reality behind these marvelous miracles.

Yes, he had authority over demons. Why? How does that touch my life? Yes, he had authority over disease. What does that tell me about living the Christian life? Yes, he had authority over death.

He had authority over nature. Right in the middle is the testimony of someone who came to the Lord. He had authority over nature to show that he has authority over human nature.

And just as he can calm the storm, he can calm the storm. And we've got to keep bringing it back. And right at this feast, Jesus announces the spiritual intention of all of his healing.

He said, I am a soul doctor. And I'm not just going to heal arbitrarily. And even though it's true he had compassion and reached out for those who had physical infirmity, he was always teaching.

Every miracle he did was a parable of action. And every parable he taught was a miracle of teaching. And his miracles and parables, they both taught.

And to just look at a miracle and say, he did this. We're going to miss the point. He did this.

Why? He did this in order that I might know this. And so it's important then to study it that way. You know, one of the worst diseases you could have had back then was leprosy.

The Bible never said that Jesus healed a leper. You say, well, wait a minute now. I'll show you where it does.

No, you won't. You'll show me where he cleansed the leper. He healed other diseases, but leprosy he cleansed.

Why did he cleanse leprosy instead of heal it? Because he's talking about cleansing sin. Leprosy is a picture of cleansing sin. And I'll show you that when we get to that.

But in every case, there is this spiritual reality underneath it. And so as we go through, Lord willing, we'll say, oh, that's what it means to be delivered from a fever. That's what it means to once be humped, but now to be able to walk straight, and so on.

And we'll go through each of them and trust the Lord together that God will give us a good time getting underneath all of that. Now if you go back to Luke chapter 4, and I want to give you one little illustration here. According to Luke 4.31, he now goes to Capernaum.

This is where he's going to set up his base of operation for his Galilean ministry. Now let me sort of give you an outline for the rest of chapter 4. In verses 33 to 37, he's in the synagogue. In verses 38 and 39, he's in Peter's home.

In 40 and 41, he's out in the streets. And the chapter ends, he's in the wilderness. So he moves around in this chapter from the synagogue to the house, to the streets, and then out to the wilderness.

I'm going to jump over chapter 33 to 37, the first story of the demon possession, because I want to pick that up with all the demon stories at one time when we come to the transfiguration. So if you'll be patient

with me there, that's the reason for that. Now look at verse 38 and 39, and we'll use this as an illustration, and then we'll close with this.

And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they made request of him on her behalf. Standing over her, he rebuked the fever, and it left her.

And she immediately arose and waited on them. Now, of course, we believe it literally happened. His mother-in-law really had a fever.

Let me give you a little background. This took place in Capernaum at Peter's house. Actually, Mark tells us it was co-owned by the brothers, Peter and Andrew.

They both owned the home together. Jesus also had a house in Capernaum. We'll study that when we get to chapter 4. See, we sort of say, yeah, they tore the roof off the house and let this guy down.

Whose house? Think about that. Whose house was it? They tore a roof off the house. And I think we'll find out that it was the house of our Lord Jesus.

We learn here, of course, that Peter was married. We know that. He had a mother-in-law.

Evidently, she lived with him. We know more about Peter's family than probably anybody else's. We know his wife traveled with him.

Corinthians tells us that when he went on his missionary journey. History tells us that Peter had a little daughter and she was paralyzed. We don't know much about her except that church history records that.

Anyway, this particular miracle of Peter's mother-in-law is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Only Luke tells us verse 48. It was a high fever.

Why is that important? I guess because it's Dr. Luke. If the doctor says high, it's probably high. I don't know.

Was it 101 or 102 or 3 or 4? I don't know how high. But I know the doctor said it was high. So it was a very high fever.

We know she was in bed with this fever because the Bible says Jesus came and stood over her where she was. He rebuked the fever. In another connection, I'll show you.

Jesus loved the expression. In the Greek, it's be muzzled. He just liked that expression.

Sometimes when he showed his authority, he would just say that. When he stood out with his hands over the sea, remember the rough sea, and we read in English, it says be still. But literally in the Greek, it's be muzzled.

And when those demons were giving that kid a hard time and dashing him down, Jesus said be muzzled. And he muzzled the demon. And this fever, Jesus is actually going to use the same word now.

He's going to muzzle the fever. And so over and over again, when Jesus did these miracles, he just muzzled it. I just picture a wild dog un-muzzled, ready to tear you to shreds, and he just muzzled it so that it can't do you any harm.

In verse... All of the records teach us this. In Matthew's account and Luke's account especially, verse 39, after the fever left, she immediately arose and waited on them. Now, I think that's the spiritual nugget.

I think there's a little clue there about the spiritual intention of this miracle. The physical fever illustrates spiritual fever. And this first miracle has to do with ministry.

After the fever, she rose up and began to minister. Now if you ever had a picture of helplessness, I think a fever would picture that. Especially a high fever.

That just drains you. You get a high fever and you just lose all of your strength and it leaves you just as limp as a rag. Now, Peter's mother-in-law was so helpless, she couldn't minister.

She's laying in the bed. Mark tells us, Luke doesn't tell us this, but Mark says that Jesus went over, took her hand, touched her hand, and then muzzled the fever and spoke the word of authority and so on. And then it says, she rose up and immediately ministered.

No convalescence after a high fever. A high fever is going to leave you weak and the doctor is going to say, now take it easy for a little while. Go slow.

Stay in bed. Get your strength back. It's going to be gradual.

Not when Jesus heals the spiritual fever. Because the spiritual fever, you rise from fever, natural weakness, to supernatural strength. The reason I call attention to this is, I happen to know the meaning of this particular miracle because of how badly burned I was in my Christian life on the fever.

What I mean is, I thought this whole idea of serving the Lord was moving from natural weakness to natural strength. And so my Christian life went in spurts. And I'd get all enthused.

I'm going to do it. I'm going to read every day. I'm going to get up early.

I'm going to share the Lord. And I'd get all excited. And then I'd get pooped out.

And I just sort of fell apart. And then I'd go to a revival meeting or something else and get all excited again and then peter out again. And my whole life was spiritual malaria.

I had one foot in hot water, one foot in cold water, fever chill, fever chill. And one time I'm hot for the Lord and the next time I'm fevered again and burning myself out. The secret of Christian ministry is that the Lord finds us weak, naturally weak.

He touches us and raises us not to natural strength or else you're going to need the convalescence. He doesn't raise us from natural weakness to natural strength. The secret of ministry is that the Lord touches you in your weakness and raises you to supernatural strength.

She rose up in His strength, not her strength. It wasn't a matter of going from natural weakness to natural strength. But by His touch, she rose up to ministry.

I think the church today as a whole, I don't want to judge, but I think it has a fever. I really do. And I think they need to learn the secret that he taught us right in this early message.

They need the Lord to touch, hold them by the hand so that they can get up and serve in the strength of the Lord instead of their own strength. If you serve the Lord in your own strength, it won't be long and

you're going to wonder what happened. You're going to burn out.

I'd burn myself out. I consider myself a pastor casualty. I did.

I had a church and I burned out because I did it all in my own strength. And I was trying... I forgot that the government shall be on His shoulders. And I tried to put it on my shoulders.

And I think there are many Christian workers who are just destroying themselves, working their heads off for the Lord. And they're not knowing the Lord. And they're not experiencing... Nobody told her to serve.

They didn't say, alright, now you've been ministered under, you ought to get up and serve. It was a natural, spontaneous outwork. When the Lord touches you, you're going to want to express and serve Him.

She could have just sat there and said, what a feeling I had. Oh, it was so... When the Lord touched me, it was like electricity came through me. It was like goose bumps all over.

And I felt a surge of health and strength. She didn't do that. She just got up and started.

When the Lord really touches you, and you rise in His strength, you're going to just want to minister unto others. Well, that's an illustration, and it may even be a weak one, but I think behind all the miracles are these tremendous principles of Christian living. Our Lord Jesus was certainly the friend of the sick.

And He's a friend of weary missionaries, pastors, elders, teachers, Sunday school teachers. I don't know if you've ever experienced that, where you get all excited and enthused for the Lord, and then you say, oh boy, I get so tired, and then you just drain, and then you just try again, and so on. That's not God's intention.

God's intention is that you allow Him to touch you, and to raise you up with His power, and then spontaneously, automatically, as natural as breathing, you will want to minister unto others. And that becomes the testimony. Well, He's going to lay down those kind of principles in all of the miracles, and Lord willing, we'll give a shot to looking at each one of those.

But we'll stop there. Comments or questions? Well, thank you. Thank you.

I think if we would allow it to happen, it would be the most beautiful thing that could ever happen. Well, let's bow. Oh, I'm sorry.

Yes. I was going to ask, how do you do just what? I think all God ever wanted from us. There's no magic word.

I think God wants to be God, and He wants you to be you. And the best thing you could ever do for the Lord is just be yourself. And as you surrender to the Lord and just are yourself, you're going to do what honors Him.

It's the way He wants. But I think we haven't learned to stay out of the Godhead, and we try to do His part. Let Him do His part.

Well, let's bow. Father, thank you so much for your Galilean ministry, where you went about doing all of these redemptive miracles where you were the sole doctor. Help us as we study Luke, as we go through

these marvelous miracles to learn the spiritual principles behind them that we might embrace your life.

Lord, we get so tired of living in our own strength. Thank you for holding our hand, raising us up that we might minister to you and to others. With Matthew, we want to throw a big celebration and a party in your honor because of all you've done for us.

Work these things in our hearts, we pray. Thank you. Thank you for coming.

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